

From Farm To Table



Working with Local Farmers to Access Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Resource Guide

**Produced by
Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council
Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Resources**

Winter 2008

The Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council

The Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council (MF&VNC) is a collaborative effort that seeks to increase awareness of and access to affordable, high quality fruits and vegetables for individuals throughout Massachusetts.

Cover Photo Credit: Kevin Kerfoot

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Laura Thompson and Elizabeth Boeckelman, Nutrition graduate students at Boston University Sargent College of Allied Health and Stacy Schuller and Kristine Welch Dietetic Interns at Simmons College for their many contributions to this project. Thank you to reviewers: Members of the Massachusetts Fruit & Vegetable Nutrition Council; Maria F. Bettencourt, MPH and Cynthia Taft Bayerl, MS, RD, LDN from the Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.



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Introduction

The Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council (MF&VNC) has teamed up to bring you this resource with information on how to bring local produce to your business or school. Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. People who eat plenty of fruits and vegetables are more likely to be at reduced risk for chronic conditions such as heart disease and stroke, some types of cancers and type-2 diabetes. Choosing locally-grown, fresh produce over produce that has traveled long distances has many benefits. These include:

- **Locally grown produce is healthier.** Produce that you purchase at your local farmer's market has often been picked within 24 hours of your purchase. This means that it tastes better and has better nutritional value.
- **Locally grown produce tastes better.** Because the produce will be handled less, locally grown fruit does not have to be prepared to stand up to the rigors of shipping. This means that you are getting fruits and vegetables that were allowed to ripen until the last possible minute on the vine. As a result, they will taste much better.
- **Locally grown produce is abundant and less expensive in season.** Buying locally grown produce helps you keep in touch with the season. You will be eating produce when it's at its peak taste, readily available, and least expensive. Because of the varied climate in the Northeast, different fruits and vegetables are available at different times of the year.
- **Buying locally grown produce means that you will be supporting the local economy.** Buying directly from family farmers helps them stay in business. You'll be strengthening your community by investing your produce dollars close to home.

Setting up a farm to school, farm to business, or farm to community program is a win-win for everyone. It takes some leadership, relationship building and use of available resources to start up the program. We hope that you will give it a try!

Massachusetts Farms Interested in School Customers

Acton

Butter Brook Farm
Storage crops, organic grains
Guy McKay
(978) 263-1936

Stonefield Farm
Vegetables
Andrea Austin
(978) 263-5572

Amherst

Atkins Farm
Tree fruits, cider
Pauline Lannon
(413) 253-9528

Athol

The Farm School
Organic produce
Reid Bryant
(978) 575-1470

Barre

Many Hands Organic Farm
Organic produce, organic meat
Julie Rawson
(978) 355-2853

Chicopee

McKinstry Market Garden
Apples, vegetables
Bill McKinstry
(413) 297-3338

Cohasset

Holy Hill Farm
Produce and herbs
Ben Wolbach
(781) 383-1455

Verrill Farm

Vegetables
Steve Verrill
(978) 369-4494

Deerfield

Williams Farm, Inc.
Maple syrup, corn
Sandy Williams
(413) 773-5186

Dracut

Brox Farm
Tree and small fruits, vegetables
David Dumaresq
(978) 454-3434

East Longmeadow

Chestnut Hill Farm
Fruits
(413) 525-6145

Feeding Hills

Cecchi and Sons
Vegetables
E. Cecchi
(413) 786-2489

Framingham

Sunshine Farm
Vegetables
Jim Geoghegan
(508) 655-5022

Franklin

Fairmount Fruit Stand
Fruits
Benny Koshivas
(508) 533-8737

Great Barrington

Taft Farms, Inc.
Organic vegetables, small fruits
Dan Tawczynski
(413) 528-1515

Greenfield

Unaitis Farm Stand
Theresa Unaitis
(413) 772-0400

Hadley

Czajkowski Farm
Vegetables, small fruits
Joe Czajkowski
(413) 549-0805

Harvard

Carlson Orchards
Apples, cider
Frank Carlson
(978) 456-3916

Hatfield

Szawlowski Potato Farm
Potatoes, onions
Shelly Szawlowski
(413) 247-9240

Teddy C. Smiarowski Farm

Teddy Smiarowski
(413) 247-5181

Wendoowski Farm

Anthony and Helen
(413) 247-5476

Haverill

Schwartz Market Garden
Melons, vegetables
Alan Schwartz
(617) 988-4051

Hingham

Penniman Farm
Vegetables
Daniel Nessralla
(781) 749-5443

Lancaster

Deershorn Farm
Vegetables
Cindy McLaughlin
(978) 368-7603

Leyden

Dancing Bear Farm
Vegetables
Tom Ashley
(413) 774-2021

Lunenburg

Lanni Orchards
Tree fruits, vegetables
Pat Lanni
(978) 582-6246

Millis

Tangerini's Spring Street Farm
Vegetables
Laura Tangerini
(508) 376-5024

New Salem

Hamilton Orchards
Tree fruits, berries, applesauce
Barbara Hamilton
(978) 544-6867

New Salem Orchards and Preserves

Apples, berry jams
Bill Colnes
(978) 544-3437

Norfolk

Duckenfield
Tomatoes
Ian Klobucher
(508) 520-0200

North Brookfield

Brookfield Orchards, Inc.
Apples
Dorothy Civin
(508) 867-6858

Orange

Seeds of Solidarity Farm
Salad greens, garlic, tomatoes
Ricky Baruc
(978) 544-7564

Peabody

Brooksby Farm
Apples, vegetables
Jim O'Brien
(978) 531-7456

Pittsfield

Bartlett's Orchard
Apples, raspberries
Francis Bartlett
(978) 834-2343

Plymouth

Cranbery Hill Farm
Organic cranberries
Rob Keese
(508) 888-9179

Rehoboth

Oakdale Farm
Vegetables, cider
Richard Pray
(508) 336-7681

Sheffield

Woodside Orchards
Tree and small fruits
Jim Kelly
(413) 229-8224

Shelburne

Apex Orchards
Apples, peaches, organic apples
Tim Smith
(413) 625-9630

South Dartmouth

Eva's Garden
Organic greens and herbs
Eva Sommaripa
(508) 636-5869

South Deerfield

Atlas Farm
Organic vegetables & watermelon
Sara Porth
(413) 695-2728

Long Plain Farm

Vegetables
Scott Hutkoski
(413) 655-1210

Nourse Farms, Inc.

Small fruits
Tim Nourse
413 665-2658

Pioneer Valley Growers Assoc.

Vegetables
Bill Barrington
(413) 665-4047

Souh Natick

Look Out Farm
Tree and small fruits
John Burns
(508) 651-1539

Stow

Applefield Farm
Fruits and vegetables
Kirsten Mong
(978) 897-9308

Carver Hill Farm

Apples
Chuck Lord
(978) 897-6117

West Brookfield

Ragged Hill Orchards
Apples
Keith Arsenault
(508) 867-2187

Westhampton

Outlook Farm
Apples
Brad Morse
(413) 529-9388

Westport

Sampson Farm
Potatoes
Jerome Sampson
(508) 674-2733

Woburn

Spence Farm
Vegetables
Bud Spence
(781) 933-484

For further information or assistance in locating farm products, please contact:

*Massachusetts Farm to School Project
kelerwin@localnet.com, (413) 253-3844*

or

http://www.mass.gov/agr/markets/Farm_to_school/

Berkshire Grown

314 Main Street
P.O. Box 983
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Region: Western

Phone: Day: Telephone: 413-528-0041 **Fax:** 413-528-6241

Email: buylocal@berkshiregrown.org

Languages of education material:

URL: <http://www.berkshiregrown.org>

Description of Program: Berkshire Grown promotes and supports locally based agriculture as a vital part of a healthy Berkshire community, economy and landscape. Berkshire Grown promotes “Buying Locally” through its e-newsletter and website, which includes “Map-o-licious, a guide to local farms, farmers markets, pick-your-own fields and restaurants. The “Buy Berkshire Grown” Campaign increases awareness of the value of local agriculture and boosts income to family farms, farmers’ markets and other local food outlets. Berkshire Grown’s Farm to Table: Business to Business Program (B2B) facilitates partnerships between 90+ growers and food producers and 60+ professional food buyers, mostly restaurants. Events highlighting Local Agriculture include “The Beautiful Bountiful Berkshires,” a harvest extravaganza, highlighting the farmer-chef connection; Berkshire Grown Restaurant week, jump start the growing season with discounts for members at local restaurants. Berkshire Grown prints and distributes the essential Farm Map, a guide to locally grown food, flowers and plants. Currently, Berkshire Grown is initiating “More Farms, More Food,” to promote agricultural use of land. A Local Goods & Gifts Project promotes buying locally to raise funds for schools. Berkshire Grown’s SHARE THE BOUNTY project raises funds to buy shares in CSA farms and donates the fresh food to local food pantries.

Massachusetts Farm to School Project

400 Amity St. Suite 2
Amherst MA 01002

Region: Statewide

Contact: Kelly Erwin, Managing Consultant

Phone: 413-253-3844 **Fax:** 413-253-2701

Email: kelerwin@localnet.com

Hours of operation: variable – email is preferred method of first contact

Languages spoken: English

Languages of education material: English

Description of Program: The Mass. Farm to School Project provides technical assistance to farmers and to school food service directors, K-college, who are hoping to bring locally grown farm products into school cafeterias across Massachusetts. Individual consultation and promotional materials are available. The Project, a grassroots effort, partners with other agricultural and educational efforts to promote farm sustainability and student well-being and receives support from sources such as the Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Project Bread, and private funders. Ongoing collaborators in the Project also include The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Agricultural Preservation Corp., Mass. Dept. of Education and MassDevelopment.

Posters:

“Locally Grown Food Served Here”

“10 Good Reasons to Buy Locally Grown” (also available from MDAR)

“Massachusetts Produce Seasonal Availability” charts

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA)

One Sugarloaf Street
South Deerfield, MA 01373

Region: Western

Contact: Annie Cheatham (Executive Director)

Phone: Day: 413-665-7100 **Toll Free:** 1-877-965-7100

Fax: 413-665-7101

Email: annie@buylocalfood.com

Hours of operation: M-Th 8:30-5:30, F 8:30-12:30

Languages spoken: English

Languages of education material: English, some “Buy Local” promotional materials in Spanish, Polish, Russian and Vietnamese.

URL: <http://www.buylocalfood.com/staff.html>

Description of Program: Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) works to link the community with local farms in order to strengthen the local food and farming system. CISA’s goals include enhancing health through greater consumption of fresh locally grown food, strengthening local economies, and preserving the region’s agricultural heritage. CISA’s “Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown” public awareness campaign, now in its seventh year, has raised widespread awareness in the region of the benefits to health, the environment, and the economy of buying locally grown. CISA works to ensure that all segments of the community recognize the benefits of and have access to locally grown food.

Local Hero Campaign— includes more than 200 farm, restaurant, retailer, specialty food, and farmer’s market members in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties. CISA staff members are available to help farmers access new markets and to help institutions, schools, and restaurants in our region work successfully with local farmers.

Farm Products Guide—annually distributed throughout the region in daily and weekly newspapers, this guide helps buyers of all kinds to find farmers.

Local Heroes School Network—Celebrating schools that forge connections with local agriculture, the Network unites parents, teachers, administrators, food service professionals and community members who learn from each others’ experiences in order to strengthen farm-to-school activities.

Other CISA programs include technical assistance for farmers and other agricultural and food businesses, Senior FarmShare, Farm2City, and Massachusetts Heritage Wool Blankets.

Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP)

One State Bog Rd., P.O. Box 569
East Wareham, MA 02538

Region: Southeast

Contact: Sarah Kelley, Executive Director

Phone: Day: 508-295-2212 x 50 **Fax:** 508-295-6387

Email: skelley@umassd.edu

Hours of operation: 9:00-5:00, M-F

Languages spoken: English, French

Languages of education material: English

URL: www.umassd.edu/semaph

Description of Program: SEMAP is an organization whose mission is to help agricultural enterprises in Southeastern Massachusetts achieve economic success through two main program areas: Technical/Business Assistance and Market Development. The Technical Assistance program area provides targeted business and marketing education to local agriculture enterprises. The Market Development program works to create demand locally for locally-produced farm, nursery, and agriculture products.

Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom

P.O. Box 345
Seekonk, MA 02771

Region: Southeast

Contact:

Phone: Day: (508) 336-4426 **Fax:** (508) 336-0682

Email: dchogan@sprynet.com

Hours of operation:

Languages spoken:

Languages of education material:

URL: <http://www.aginclassroom.org>

Description of Program: Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom's mission is to foster awareness and learning in all areas related to the food and agriculture industries and the economic and social importance of agriculture to the state, nation and the world. MAC's resources include educational curricula and a mini-grant program that awards funds to Massachusetts educators for agricultural education projects.

The Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets

240 Beaver Street
Waltham, MA 02452

Region: Metrowest

Contact: Jeff Cole

Phone: Day: 781-893-8222 **Fax:** 781-893-8777

Email: jeff@massfarmersmarkets.org

URL: <http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/>

Description of Program: The Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets (FMFM) is a service organization dedicated to the needs of Farmers, Consumers and Communities. FMFM work closely with, and are aided by UMASS Extension and the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture. Sensitive to the needs of farmers, consumers, and community developers, FMFM strive to maintain the success of Farmers' Markets in Massachusetts.

Chefs Collaborative

262 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02116

Region: Boston

Phone: (617) 236-5200 **Fax:** (617) 236-5272

Email: info@chefscollaborative.org

Hours of operation: Mon-Fri 9-5

Languages spoken: English

Languages of education material: English

URL: <http://www.chefscollaborative.org/>

Description of Program: The Chefs Collaborative is a national network of more than 1,000 members of the food community who promote sustainable cuisine by celebrating the joys of local, seasonal and artisanal cooking. Membership is open to anyone interested in interconnectedness of the environment and food choices.

Essex County "Buy Local" Program

82 Woodward Avenue
West Gloucester 01930-2449

Region: Northeast

Contact name: Christine Braley Rasmussen

Phone number: 978-281-0309 **Fax number:** 978-281-0309

Email: chrisras@gis.net

Hours of operation: Like farmers: 24/7

Languages spoken: English

URL: <http://www.buyfresh.org>

Description of program: The Essex "Buy Local" program works on sustaining Essex County farmers through education and outreach. The program raises awareness about the benefits of maintaining farms in the area and encourages residents to spend \$7.25 a week at local farms and farmers' markets in order to keep farms and green space in Massachusetts.

How to Start up a Farmers' Market in Your Community:

Step by Step Guidelines

Start planning the market at least 6-9 months prior to the growing season to allow time for market research, organizational development, site selection, recruitment of farmers, and market promotion.

Specifically, the planning of a new market will require the following steps:

1. Set goals: Define general goals of the new market including:

- Primary benefits to the community
- Accessibility to target population
- Product offering
- Support of local agriculture
- Community interaction

2. Find partners: Once you have defined the goals, find out who else is interested in having a farmers' market in your community. Local businesses, farmers, banks, and community groups can play roles as:

- Organization committee members
- Sponsors
- Funding sources
- *The following organizations can be very helpful:*
 - The Chamber of Commerce
 - Church/religious organizations
 - Conservation commissions
 - Community development corporations
 - Growers associations
 - State and County Farm Bureaus
 - Planning offices
 - Garden clubs; horticultural societies
 - Neighborhood centers
 - Senior citizen organizations
 - Farmers' market organization
(www.mass.gov/massgrown/farmers_markets.thm)
 - UMASS extension (www.umassextension.org) and Cape Cod Extension (www.capecodextension.org)
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Division of Markets
 - Community or Economic Development Office

3. Set up a meeting of all the interested people and groups:

- Plan ahead
 - Give plenty of notice
 - Be clear about when and where the meeting will be held
 - Hold it in an accessible and comfortable place
 - Publicize it well
- Cover the following
 - Define goals
 - Delegate tasks: e.g., site and market research
 - Set up a committee structure to ensure task completion
 - Set task deadlines
 - Set a date for your next meeting
 - Be prepared and take notes

4. Conduct market and site research:

Market research

- *Characteristics to investigate*
 - Needs
 - Tastes
 - Price range
 - Peak shopping times
 - Farmers' available supply
- *Secondary sources of information*
 - Population info: Census data or the library
 - Produce sales: trade association journals, marketing reports, business census data
 - Department of Agriculture or UMASS Extension, Cape Cod Extension
- *Primary sources: direct surveying*
 - Methods
 - In person: highest response rate, but reaches the narrowest range of people and is time-consuming
 - Mail: reaches a wider swath of people; be sure to include a deadline and self-addressed stamped envelope
 - Telephone
 - Design
 - The best questions are unbiased but specific enough so that you can glean useful information

- A local academic institution or the Department of Public Health Nutrition Program may be willing to help with your question design.

Site research

- *Site selection criteria*
 - Visible/centrally located
 - Accessible to patrons (handicap access, public transportation, road access and capacity, parking)
 - Accessible to farmers and trucks
 - Infrastructure (police and fire routes, running water, bathroom and telephone access, shade, shelter)
- *Legal considerations*
 - Check the zoning bylaws for your community to see if any ordinances apply to open-air markets
 - Research the required permits and licenses (for food stamps, product sale, resale, and processed food) at the Chamber of Commerce, town planning office, and Department of Public Health
 - Research food stamp and WIC Farmers' Market Coupon Program regulations
 - Research scale regulations with the Bureau of Standards
 - Research liability coverage
 - Consider creating a corporation so that insurance will relieve the director of legal and financial liability. Most markets do not incorporate.
 - Hire a lawyer to work with the committee on these decisions
- *Rent*
 - Potential locations with low-moderate rent include a town common, public square, parking lot, vacant lot, side street, church or school yard.
 - Good relations with the town or city may help waive fees.
 - A higher-rent location may be worthwhile if it is more visible and accessible.
- *Taxes*
 - Many markets operate on a non-profit basis—they are tax-exempt and eligible to receive donations.
 - Incorporated markets may be taxed by the state
 - Farmer-run markets can be set up as an agricultural cooperative (which can be either for-profit or not-for-profit)

- For more information, contact the Secretary of State's office or the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Cooperative Service in Washington, D.C.
- *Support*
Discussed your site plans with community agencies including the Department of Public Works, the Board of Health, police and fire departments. Seek their advice and gain their support.

5. Decide on the market rules of operation:

Product Offering

- Rules vary based on market philosophy, the needs of the farmers, and the demand of the consumers.
- Options for product regulations:
 - Only allow farmers to sell their own crops that have been picked within 24 hours of sale.
 - Permit cooperative sales arrangements between farmers.
 - Allow farm-processed goods (e.g., preserves, baked goods, honey and cider).
 - Include arts and crafts.

Hours of Operation

- Based on market research results
- Examples of consumer considerations
 - If the market is in a business district, you may consider opening in the afternoon so that people can shop on their way home from work
 - If the market is in a residential neighborhood with a large elderly population, morning shopping may be more popular
- Examples of farmer considerations
 - Inquire if produce is picked that morning or the night before
 - Consider traffic they may encounter en route to the market
 - Be aware of the growing season

6. Write the market's bylaws which will state:

- The purpose of the association
- Where it is located
- Where the business operates
- Who the officers and directors are
- The rules for decision making (membership, fees, roles/duties of officers and directors, meetings, elections and amendments)

7. Select a Board of Directors:

This group prepares the financial budget, sets fees, and hires a Market Manager. It is typically composed of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and several directors.

- Try to elect a diverse group that represents the various interests involved—farmers, local businesses, community officials, consumers, and sponsors.
- Include individuals with varied skills, including legal, business, marketing, and fund-raising experience.

8. Prepare a budget:

The budget should cover 3 years and include all likely expenses, any outside funding, break-even point calculation, and monthly cash flow projections for the first year.

Likely expenses will include rent, insurance, permits, license fees, taxes, advertising and promotion, security, and staff salary.

9. Set the fees:

The Board of Directors sets the fees based on the operating costs of the market. Fees:

- Should cover reasonable expenses to guarantee good management and promotion of the market, as their success will benefit the farmers.
- May vary by farmer. They may be based on the size of the farm or truck. There also may be different rates for full-time farmers versus part-time farmers or gardeners.
- Determine the market's spending appropriations, including
 - Rent
 - Staffing
 - Marketing

10. Hire a market manager:

Many markets appoint a farmer or a volunteer to collect fees and supervise the market.

However, the farmers may be willing to pay the cost of a professional part-time market manager that will guarantee a better-run market.

The Board should consider hiring a market manager with the following skills:

- Public relations skills
- Community and press contacts
- People skills to balance the needs of the farmers and the community

- Organizational skills to manage the predetermined tasks set out by the Board of Directors (redeeming food stamps, collecting fees, obtaining permits and licenses, and attending public meetings or hearings) as well as any new issues that may arise, including
 - Pricing
 - Vendor space allocation
 - Product quality management
 - Attractive presentation
 - Health and safety
 - Signs and promotion
 - Ethics and moral conduct

Sample Programs in the Bay State: Farm to Table Across Massachusetts

Using the resources in the first portion of this booklet, Massachusetts residents have launched local produce initiatives throughout the State. The following is a sampling of the wide range of possibilities for farm to table programs that can increase access to fruits and vegetables in your area. Hopefully these program descriptions provide ideas, inspiration, and additional resources for anyone looking to start a farm to table program of their own!

Massachusetts Farm to School Project

The Mass Farm to School Project provides technical assistance to farmers and to school food service directors K-college, who are hoping to bring locally grown farm products into school cafeterias across Massachusetts. Individual consultation and promotional materials are available.

Program: Farm to School
Region: Statewide
Contact: Kelly Erwin or Melissa Adams
413-253-3844
kelerwin@localnet.com

Resources and Finances: The Project, a grassroots effort, partners with other agricultural and educational efforts to promote farm sustainability and student well-being and receives support from sources such as the Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources, Project Bread, and private funders. Collaborative supporters of the Project include The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Agricultural Preservation Corp., Mass. Dept of Education, and MassDevelopment.

Feedback: Some public school food service directors have reported that school meal participation and consumption of produce increased when fresh local foods were introduced.

Challenges: Finding schools and farms which can work well together to set up a mutually agreeable sales and purchasing system; continued funding for the Project as well as increased funding within the schools for the purchase of fresh local produce; convincing food service directors of the benefits of buying fruits and vegetables directly from the growers.

Helpful Hints: Farm sales to schools must be profitable to be sustainable. Advocates must be truly supportive of both food service personnel and the farmers. Remember that it takes patience to change the food system.

Additional Resources: www.mass.gov/agr/markets/Farm_to_school/

Haley House

Haley House began 40 years ago as a soup kitchen in a brownstone in the South End of Boston. Today the bottom floor of the brownstone is still a soup kitchen and the top floors contain living space for the kitchen volunteers. As more social services have become available to at-risk populations in Boston over the past 10 years, Haley House has refined its focus from providing general soup kitchen and food pantry services to conscientiously offering healthy, high-quality food for their clients.

Program: Food Pantry
Region: Boston
Contact: Christine Evans
617-236-8132
cevens@haleyhouse.org

Resources and Finances: Noonday Farm, the Food Project, a work-share at Linden Tree Farm in Lincoln, and the Greater Boston Food Bank are all sources of local produce donations for Haley House. All of the food and labor in Haley House's food programs are donated. Haley House's longevity as well as their reputation in the community and strong commitment to their guests makes organizations more willing to donate to their cause.



Feedback: Proof of the program's effectiveness is in its popularity. The food pantry is so overwhelmed with eager clients that Haley House had to put a geographic limit on the people it could serve. One woman commented that Haley House makes it possible to finally follow her doctor's diet recommendations.

Challenges: The biggest challenge for the food pantry at Haley House is efficiently utilizing all available

resources. The yield of small farms can be somewhat unpredictable and may require some creativity. For instance, after a large seasonal influx of cabbage, Haley House volunteers pickled the cabbage into sauerkraut. The cabbage did not spoil, and even though cabbage season is now over guests are still enjoying it in a different form. Additionally, they have begun exploring methods for blanching and freezing their produce so they can offer it throughout the winter.

Helpful Hint: "Start small—Just stick your foot in the door." Try growing just one thing or talk to a local farmer. Then once you're inspired, grow and learn from there.

Additional Resources: <http://www.haleyhouse.org>

Farm at Long Island Shelter

The farm directors and homeless clients at the Long Island Shelter run the only Northeast Organic Farming Association certified organic farm in Boston. In its seventh season, the farm produces over 30,000 pounds of produce yearly and serves 850 homeless individuals every day. This self-reliant farm provides high-quality, first-harvest produce, and partnered with the Homeless Services of Boston Public Health, the farm offers hands-on job training, life skills and education for homeless individuals as part of the Serving Ourselves Job Training Program. Employees learn about the technique and business of food production and establish pride for foods that feed other people at the shelter.

Program: Farm to Community
Region: Boston
Contact: Mariann Bucina
(617) 534-2526 x.383
mariannbucina@fobh.org

Resources and Finances: This non-profit organization runs mainly on federal, city and private funds, but also earns its own revenue. Twenty percent of the fruits and vegetables produced are sold to local restaurants and Farmers Markets. The farm also runs thanks to volunteer efforts from schools, churches, garden clubs and in-kind donations from companies.

Feedback: Although the Farm at Long Island is not well known in the community, those who are familiar with the program consider it a pride-filled success. “People love the program because it’s environmentally conscience, economically advantageous and feeding the most vulnerable population amazing food!”

Challenges: The two major challenges the program encounters are funding and staffing. As with all community programs, funding is always a major issue. Generating revenue from the public and private sectors is a constant. The farm also wishes to increase sales in Boston area restaurants, but faces the challenge of transportation and shipping costs. Also, because staffing is mainly from the homeless clients, there are many health and recovery issues presented that are not as frequent with a typical farm staff. Employee drop-off can be expected at the end of the season.

Helpful Hint: “If you have the land, interest and will power, DO IT!” It is a big undertaking, but the positives for the community and environment outweigh the negatives. Also, forming partnerships is important to provide services and expertise that will compliment your program.

Additional Resources: Friends of Boston’s Homeless (<http://www.fobh.org/>)

Greater Boston Food Bank

The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) is a non profit organization which distributes USDA commodity foods, fresh fruits and vegetables, and packaged foodstuffs donated by businesses and individuals, to over 600 hunger relief agencies across Massachusetts.

Program: Food Insecurity

Region: Boston

Contact: Steve Cheatham
(617) 427-5200 ext. 5023
scheatham@gbfb.org



Resources and Finances: The GBFB relies on a rich network of partners for its resources. Monetary funding is provided by the State and through fundraising. Food is supplied in the form of USDA commodities, food donations to America's Second Harvest, and from retailers such as Trader Joe's,

Shaw's, and Stop&Shop. GBFB procures and distributes fresh produce from the Mass Grown Program (provides local produce as part of the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program), and also purchases produce from the Chelsea Terminal Market.

Each day, the GBFB utilizes over 60 employees, its large warehouse, fleet of trucks, community partners such as the New England Produce Council, and numerous volunteers to ensure that food is distribute efficiently to hungry people state-wide.

Feedback: Since embarking on a concerted effort 9 years ago to acquire more fresh produce for the program, the GBFB has increased its poundage of fresh fruits and vegetables from 300,000 lbs/yr in 1998 to 3.5 million lbs/yr in 2007. Both the local food banks and the populations they serve have responded positively to the increase in access to high quality, seasonal produce. GBFB has even worked with its farmers to grow specific vegetables requested by food bank visitors such as collard greens and carrots.

Challenges: Building a demand for products that meets the agency's volume or supply is a formidable challenge faced by the GBFB, especially given the perishable nature of many of the items in their supply. Steve Cheatham, Food Acquisition Director for the GBFB cautions, "If you build your supply without the demand, you are never going to get anywhere." As a result, Steve and his team work continuously to educate the public on the different types of produce available at the food banks and how to prepare them.

Helpful Hints: Communicating to your suppliers your desire for more fruits and vegetables is key. The GBFB developed promotional materials and did mailings to its suppliers to alert them to the demand and desire for more produce.

Additional Resources: <http://www.gbfb.org/>

Jordan Boys & Girls Club / Camp Harbor View

The Jordan Boys & Girls Club of Chelsea began a gardening club for children ages 6 – 12 while Camp Harbor View, a summer day camp on Boston Harbor's Long Island, initiated a similar club for children ages 10-14. The goal of the programs is to foster in the participants, an appreciation of where food comes from and of the superior taste of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Program: Community Garden

Region: Boston

Contact: Alice Vogler
(617) 884-9435 x229
avogler@bgcb.org



Resources and Finances:

The initial Gardening Club at the Jordan Boys & Girls Club was started through a small grant from the City of Chelsea called the Weed and Seed Fund. The Club received \$500 in 2003 which we used to purchase basic gardening tools, indoor seed started equipment, and other items needed to start the garden. Since then, Alice Vogler, Arts Director of both the Jordan Boys & Girls Club and Harbor View, has used her own art

budget to buy the starter seeds each year (less than \$50). At Camp Harbor View, Boston Natural Areas Network served as a partner to start the garden, supply all the tools and equipment, and to fund weekly educational visits. The time commitment of this program can be broken down as follows: indoor seed sprouting (1-2 hours); tending / watering seedlings (every other day for 3-4 weeks); planting (2-4 hours); weeding / watering / harvesting / tending (about 2 hours daily for the summer months).

Feedback: While no formal evaluation of the program has been done, Alice has received consistently positive feedback from participants. “They were always very exciting to take home their vegetables!” she said. Surplus produce is offered to the Boys & Girls club families and is used in the kids’ cooking classes taught at the Club as a means of teaching the children how to prepare what they’ve grown in a healthy and delicious way.

Challenges: Garden vandalism is a major challenge for the program. Alice confesses that “Every summer the garden suffers from some sort of garden vandalism whether it is all the beautiful green tomatoes being picked and thrown against the wall...or the watermelons!!” She has since tried to hide the vegetables under leaves, providing some measure of protection against abuse of the produce. The time and labor commitment needed for the successful running of the project is also sometimes difficult, however Vogler reports that for a lot of the youth, it seemed to be very therapeutic and the students take great pride in their work.

Helpful Hints: Don’t start a garden unless you are dedicated to it yourself. It is an ongoing, everyday educational experience for you, as a youth worker, as well as the youth you are

working with. It is first essential to determine the value of the project for yourself, and what it is you want to share with the kids. “Everyday there is something to learn from, being aware of that and seeking those moments out is important!” says Vogler.

Additional Resources: Boy’s&Girl’s Club of Boston (<http://www.bgcb.org/>) and <http://www.kidsgardening.org/>

Community Harvest Project

The Community Harvest Project had its beginnings over 35 years ago as “Food for the Needy”, a humble effort by a compassionate couple in Hopkinton to provide fresh produce to their less fortunate neighbors. Over the years, as the couple invited others in the community to join them, this effort grew into the grass roots volunteer-run, non-profit now known as the Community Harvest Project, which continues to donate 100% of its produce to local hunger relief agencies. In addition to filling a need in the community for fresh vegetables, the Project is also committed to preserving the agricultural heritage of the Blackstone Valley.

<p>Program: Food Insecurity Region: Central Contact: Ken Crater (508) 839-7402 Ext. 7 ken@control.com</p>
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Resources and Finances: The day-to-day operations of the farm are carried out by two part-time staff and a host of eager volunteers from church groups to elementary school classes. Over 1,000 volunteers lend a hand at the farm each year including 20-25 team leaders who direct the activities of the various volunteer groups. The \$40,000-50,000 needed to operate the Project yearly are provided via donations and several small grants.

Feedback: The Worcester County Food Bank has given the Project much positive feedback both on the impact of their efforts, and on which vegetables are needed, or not, for the coming season. With this information, the Project’s farm manager is able to “grow to order” to meet the needs of the hunger relief agencies it serves. Feedback obtained from the volunteer surveys is overwhelmingly glowing and speaks about the volunteers’ appreciation of working on the land and helping others.

Challenges: Ken Crater, VP/Treasurer of the Community Harvest Project, admits that the initial outreach -- gathering around the people who are going to make your program a success -- is not necessarily difficult, but is vital. He adds that people do want to help, but that you have to ask them and let them know that you’re there. Another challenge in starting this type of program is learning about farming (i.e., the techniques, environmental issues of the growing season, etc).

Helpful Hints: Ken recommends finding a farming expert with whom to consult. UMass Extension, and a contact with a PhD in Botany, were crucial in maximizing the efficiency of the Community Harvest Project operation. He emphasizes that it is also important to let stakeholders in the community know about what you are trying to do and to ask them to partner with you. Once your program is organized, word-of-mouth and some strategic efforts by a volunteer coordinator should be sufficient to attract a steady stream of volunteers to work on your farm, as has been the case for the Community Harvest Project.

Additional Resources: <http://www.community-harvest.org/>

Seeds of Solidarity

Seeds of Solidarity consists of a self-sustaining working farm and a non-profit education center. Both entities provide people of all ages with the inspiration and practical tools to use renewable energy and grow food in their communities. The motto of the organization is: 'Grow Food Everywhere' and focuses on growing and eating locally. Seeds of Solidarity works extensively with the community to promote fruit and vegetable cultivation and consumption. Examples of their efforts include an after school gardening program for teens called, SOL Garden (Seeds of Leadership); partnerships with 7 schools in the North Quabbin region to establish gardens and green houses at their school; day and after school agriculture programs; tours and workshops at the farm for the general public and for groups; consulting services for other regions in MA and beyond on implementing school gardens and related curriculum; partnerships with camps to provide education on cooking with local food; and the annual North Quabbin Art & Garlic Festival.

Program: School Garden/Farm to School
Region: Central
Contact: Deb Habib
(978) 544-9023
deb@seedsofsolidarity.org



Resources and Finances: Funding for the education center's activities comes from a combination of private foundations, federal and state grants, contributions from individuals, and fees for services (consulting). An annual newsletter and appeal for donations is sent to those on the Seeds of Solidarity mailing list. One fundraising event per year is also held. The farm supplies a few acres and 1 solar green house for the teen garden program and serves as a research and teaching ground for visitors to learn sustainable farming

techniques. For the school gardens project, required equipment includes: raised beds, simple tools and wheel barrels, access to water, solar hoop houses, compost beds, and cold frames. Seeds of Solidarity employs 1 full-time and 2 part-time staff for the educational programs. Interns and per diem staff such as a bookkeeper, consultants, program evaluator, graphic artist, and website/data base administrator, are used on an "as needed" basis. The organization has a large network of partners including the schools (K-12) that it works with, local YMCA camps, small businesses in the farming industry, the North Quabbin Community Coalition, Franklin County Waste District (composting, waste management), North Quabbin Woods (promote ecotourism), and other farms in the area (for collaboration on events).

Feedback: The Seeds of Leadership teen gardening program has been extensively evaluated and a report on the impact of school gardens on 3-4th graders has also been released, however the primary focus of the evaluations were not fruit and vegetable consumption. The data collected was more qualitative (focus groups) than quantitative but did show an increase in the desire of the children to eat more fruits and vegetables. Full copies of these reports are available at www.seedsofsolidarity.org.

Challenges: For Farm-to-School: The gap between the unfunded federal mandate to serve whole grains, fresh fruits, veggies, and other healthful foods in the schools and the lack of funding/reimbursement provided to do so.

For the school garden and curricula: Weaving the garden-based programs into the required curriculum and standards so as not to add to the time constraints that teachers feel because of the need to meet MCAS and No Child Left Behind goals.

For all of the programs, sustainability is an important challenge. It is crucial to build a solid group of personally-invested partners and advocates in order to sustain the work for the long term.

Helpful Hints: Start small and build on your successes. Be very clear of your intention and your values. Really take the time to forge partnerships, and be encouraged that kids are truly happy to be engaged in hands-on activities like gardening. They love making things and growing things and will eat what they grow!

Additional Resources: www.seedsofsolidarity.org

Clark University

Clark University's dining services are managed by Sodexo, a food and facilities management service. Sodexo sources local produce from Fowler & Hunting Produce, a local produce company in Connecticut. Fowler & Hunting acts as a distributor for local farms by collecting, combining and processing their crops in order to streamline service and increase reliability. At Clark, the buy local program is driven by the university's commitment to community and responsible citizenship. In addition to serving local produce, students will be able to participate in field trips to the local farms throughout the academic year.

Program: Farm to University
Region: Central
Contact: Allyson Murphy
781-223-7364
allyson.murphy@sodexhousa.com

Resources and Finances: In season, local produce may actually be cheaper. Out of season, buying local may be 15-20% more expensive due to limited availability. The chefs are happy with the higher quality of local ingredients and find that the burden of prep-work is the same as for conventionally-purchased produce.



Feedback: The students are one of the driving forces in the dining services offered by Sodexo at Clark. So far feedback has been very positive, and the program will expand according to student interest.

Challenges: The biggest challenge that Sodexo initially encountered when sourcing food from small local farms was reliability. The produce was wonderful, but if something went awry with the crop, the delivery would be short. To solve this issue, Sodexo partnered with Fowler & Hunting, who

gathers deliveries from a number of local farms, to create a larger and more reliable pool of produce that is still local and sustainable.

Helpful Hint: “Do your research; there is no need to reinvent the wheel.” By tapping into information and resources that are already in place, a new local produce purchasing program can be both easier and more efficient. Talking to others with experience, contacting a mediating agency, or attending a sustainability conference are all good ways to build a knowledge base as you set up a program.

Additional Resources:

Mass Farm to School Project www.mass.gov/agr/markets/Farm_to_School/
Fowler & Hunting Produce <http://www.fowlerproduce.com>

Tasty Choices

Tasty Choices is a collaborative effort of the Cambridge Public Health Department and the Cambridge Public School Districts’ food service department, to improve school meals through the addition of more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and the elimination of less healthy foods such as high sugar breakfast cereals and full fat dairy. Spearheaded by Cambridge Public Health Department’s school nutritionist, Dawn Olcott, Tasty Choices uses local produce and effective marketing techniques to offer periodic taste tests of new vegetables to the students at each of the district’s 12 public schools. A local chef with experience in developing menus for schools works with Dawn to create new recipes using the kid-approved vegetables and works with food service staff to provide hands-on training. Some of the most successful additions have been local butternut squash, fresh broccoli, and roasted red bliss potatoes. In addition to the food sampling, Dawn provides nutrition education at each taste test in order to help students make connections about where their food comes from and how it is transformed from the raw to the cooked form they see as part of a recipe on their plate.

Program: Farm to School
Region: Metrowest
Contact: Dawn Olcott
(617) 499-6668
DOlcott@challiance.org

She has recently also started working on ‘The Apple Co-op’, an idea she created with her Health Department colleague, Stacey King. ‘The Apple Co-op’ is a student-run micro enterprise. Young teens in the Middle School Partnership at the Gately Youth Center at the Peabody School, coordinate the purchasing and distribution of cases of local apples from Lanni Orchards for the

many after-school programs held in Cambridge. By interacting with both the supplier and the customers, students learn key skills of running a small business.



Resources and Finances: A 3-year, \$270,000 USDA Community Food Projects grant, coordinated by the Institute for Community Health, funded the Growing Healthy Collaborative (Institute for Community Health, Cambridge and Somerville School Food Service, CitySprouts and Groundwork Somerville garden programs, and the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers’ Markets), farm to school program. A Carol White, Physical Education for Progress Grant, thanks to the Cambridge Public Schools, funds a portion of Dawn Olcott’s position. A mini-grant from the Massachusetts

Department of Public Health funded the start up of Tasty Choices. When Tasty Choices began,

none of the 12 school kitchens were equipped with the tools necessary to cook vegetables from scratch. All were using a heat-and-serve method. Cooking tools and equipment were purchased and staff trained on how to prepare the newly developed recipes using fresh ingredients. The program relies on Pat Lanni Orchards in Lunenburg, MA for apples, butternut squash and other local veggies in season; Costa Fruit and Produce for the rest of its fruits and vegetables (in winter season); periodic help with the tastings from the Cambridge Public school garden program, City Sprouts; assistance from parents, the Healthy Children Task Force, and close collaboration with the food service director and his staff at each school.

Feedback: A formal evaluation of the program is being funded as part of the Growing Healthy grant utilizing Institute of Community Health graduate student interns from various colleges to collect and analyze the data. Informal feedback from food service staff, parents, and the kids themselves has been very positive. Parents in particular are extremely happy and report that their children are choosing to buy school lunch more frequently since Tasty Choices began. More teachers are also opting to buy the school lunch citing an increase in food quality. Some parents have even called the Food Service Director to express shock and delight that their child is requesting vegetables at home that they never previously liked.

The program has even received national feedback this year as part of the Innovation in Prevention Award given by DHHS to the Healthy Children Task Force, of which the Tasty Choices program is a part. The school district was recognized as being the number one school district in the country in the prevention and wellness category! Dawn herself also recently received a Golden Carrot Award from The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine for her innovative work in food service.

Challenges: One of the challenges of implementing a program like Tasty Choices is changing the culture of school food; staff was not initially hired to cook (hired to heat and serve only). Dawn says that the hard working Food Service staff has now embraced the program and realizes that cooking fresh foods makes sense for the benefit of the children. It also takes time to prove that the program is economically and logistically viable, but when local produce costs less than produce trucked across the country, and when the children and parents are enthusiastic about the results, the positive impact is evident.

Helpful Hints: Because of the way school food purchasing is set up, embarking on purchasing, preparation, and introduction of fresh fruits and veggies can be difficult. Food service directors are understandably busy and don't have the systems or staffing in place to make this type of systemic cultural change in the way they do business. Thus they need support and help. Dawn's advice is to find the staffing who can concentrate on acting as a liaison with and supporting food service staff as they transition, bring the local farmer to the table, and educate children, staff and parents about healthy choices.

Additional Resources: Cambridge Public Schools (www.cpsd.us/cpsdir/foodservices.cfm)

Big Fresh Café

Big Fresh Café strives to make locally-grown, organic produce accessible to regular people. Its owner, Karen Masterson has fostered a passion for local produce for years, but was frustrated that nearly all of the restaurants with local offerings were very high-end. She opened Big Fresh Café with a commitment to make it a “fast casual” establishment with prices reasonable for a customer who would otherwise patronize a chain restaurant like Quiznos or Subway.

Program: Farm to Restaurant
Region: Metrowest
Contact: Karen Masterson
bigfreshcafe@hotmail.com

Resources and Finances: Finances have been challenging for Big Fresh Café. The profit margins are small—the food costs and prep costs are high since everything is made from scratch, and the labor costs are high because they pay their employees generously in return for quality service. To save money, Karen has even been known to pick berries herself. Since she is a small purchaser, receiving deliveries from small farms is a challenge. Big Fresh compromises by sharing the delivery burden with farms—alternating pick-up and drop-off produce deliveries. Karen also barter with the farmers by offering them free lunch on delivery days as part of her payment for their goods and services.

Feedback: The feedback Karen receives from customers is quite positive, although she feels it is sometimes difficult to get the underlying message across to customers who just came in to grab a bite to eat.

Challenges: It is a “juggling act” to find harmony between Karen’s ideals and the demands of the customer. In other words, Karen would love to offer a fluid menu that changes spontaneously with produce availability and seasonality, but customers want “what they want, when they want it.” As a result, she sometimes has to purchase conventional products from larger suppliers, particularly during the winter months. In order to combat this challenge, Karen raises the profile of her purchasing practices by showcasing information about local farms and products on a chalkboard in the dining room.

Helpful Hint: “Know your customer.” It is important to stay grounded and understand what your customers will buy into, and then to tailor the product you supply to fit their demand while still maintaining your integrity. “If I can’t stay in business, I won’t be doing much of anything for these people,” Karen points out. “You have to love it,” she says. “But if you do, it can be a really beautiful thing.”

Additional Resources: (508)879-7000

CitySprouts

CitySprouts is an independent nonprofit school garden program in the Cambridge Public Schools serving children K- 8th grade. For the last seven years, CitySprouts has been working as part of the Growing Healthy Collaborative to incorporate school gardens into the school curriculum, and to provide nutrition education for students in grades 4-8 at Cambridge Public Schools. The Growing Healthy Collaborative also includes the Institute for Community Health, The Cambridge Public Schools Foodservice Department, the Somerville Public Schools Foodservice Department, Groundwork Somerville, and the Federation of Farmers Markets.

Program: School Garden

Region: Metrowest

Contact: Jane S. Hirschi

617-349-6562 x208

jsmillie@citysprouts.org



Resources and Finances: Jane S. Hirshi, the director of CitySprouts, emphasizes, “One of our strengths is that we have so many partners.” She points out that the goals of many organizations are similar—to increase the health of the students—yet resources are extremely limited. Together, the GHC can all pool their knowledge, further their common goal, optimize program awareness *and* have the best chance at procuring both private and public funding.

Feedback: Early results of a student survey indicate that students (grades 4-8)

who have participated in school garden programs are more receptive to trying new fruits and vegetables. Dawn Olcott, the School Health Nutritionist at the Cambridge Public Health Department, commented that, “the kids in the garden schools were more willing to try new vegetables and more kids liked the new items. Garden school Foodservice staff was also more familiar with the process of serving kids fresh vegetables and this makes a positive contribution as well.” Anyone interested in viewing formal survey results from the CitySprouts program may contact Dr. Virginia Chomitz at the Institute for Community Health in Cambridge, MA.

Challenges: The biggest challenge for CitySprouts is keeping up with both financial and organizational demand. Taking small steps, improving the program over time, and maintaining it at a manageable size have all helped the CitySprouts program to thrive.

Helpful Hint: To potential program organizers, Jane remarks, “First of all, Bravo! It’s hard, but is a really good thing to do.” She also emphasizes the importance of partnering. She advises to research programs in your area—know what’s already happening, think of how you can contribute or improve, and then work in cooperation with like-minded folks around you.

Additional Resources: www.citysprouts.org

Food for Free

The Farm Rescue program at Food for Free (FFF) operates in a number of arenas. First, volunteers grow crops on the “Field of Greens,” a quarter acre of land donated by Linden Tree Farm in Lincoln. Farmer’s market rescue is another key method— last year FFF rescued over 55,000 lbs of produce and bread from 5 area farmers markets. They also receive surplus donations from a number of CSA and other farms. Once the food has been gleaned from its original source, Food for Free uses a portion of the food for its home delivery baskets. Within about a day of gleaning, the rest is delivered to one of the 65 cooperating aid agencies in the Cambridge area for distribution to those in need.

Program: Farm Rescue
Region: Metrowest
Contact: David Leslie
617-868-2900
director@foodforfree.org



Resources and Finances: FFF has a part time development director to manage financial resources. Approximately 45% of FFF’s funding comes from grant money. About a quarter comes from annual appeals, where FFF reaches out to community members—residents of Cambridge as well as some of the wealthier areas where the CSAs and their subscribers are located—for donations. They are also sponsored by a number of groups including businesses, hospitals and universities.

Feedback: FFF collects feedback both from the programs it delivers food to as well as its direct home delivery clients. Of the 29 people that responded to the last home delivery survey, $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents reported an increase in fruit consumption and $\frac{1}{3}$ reported an increase in vegetable consumption. The number who said that they had to skip meals was cut in half, and the number who said that they had had to choose between paying rent and buying food decreased from 38% to 11%.

Challenges: The biggest challenge for FFF is to maintain funding. Luckily, they have a number of repeat grants and private donors. Each year as FFF is able to build its reputation, the donations gradually increase. Furthermore, FFF is able to use its current sponsors and grant awards as a public relations tool to gain new sponsors.

Helpful Hint: “Find the proper niche.” Look for an opportunity—an appropriate locale, a population in need, and existing services such as food panties or after school programs who are receptive to your interest in farm rescue.

Additional Resources: <http://www.foodforfree.org/>

Kendall Square Farmers Market

This market is in its first season and takes place every Thursday from 11-2:30. The developers at Kendall Square Corporation came up with the idea when they wanted to promote work-life balance for the many biotech workers in the area. The college jazz musicians, outdoor tables, and various vendors at the farmers market encourage office workers to go outside and enjoy lunch rather than eating at their desks. The market also strives to make locally-grown produce accessible and convenient for these often overworked individuals.

Program: Farmers Market

Region: Metrowest

Contact: Rose Fisher

617-577-7354

rmfisher@m-g.com

Resources and Finances: The Kendall Square corporate developers sponsor the farmers market—they have financially supported marketing, offered an outdoor space, and hired Rose Fisher as coordinator. The farmers pay \$50 dollars per season to participate—one of the cheapest fees in the area to attract vendors to the new market.

Feedback: Rose considers the market a success based on the high level of repeat vendors and repeat customers. She also receives positive feedback when she visits the market, such as one



woman who told her friends that she intentionally shops at the farmers market to get fresh produce for her family.

Challenges: The two major challenges that Rose has encountered in managing the farmer's market are recruiting vendors to a new market and promoting the location. Her solution for each is the same: commitment. Rose gained the vendors' trust and business with her dedication. Likewise, she continues to raise the market's profile with weekly signage as well as directions on the Kendall Square website (www.kendallsquare.org).

Helpful Hint: "Respect the farmers. They are a wonderful resource and have a great product to offer, but first and foremost you must remember that farming is this person's livelihood. When starting the market, you must commit to its success and commit yourself to your vendors in order to have success."

Additional Resources: <http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/>

Brown Bag New England

Brown Bag New England is a supplemental food distribution program for the elderly. Run by the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), the program is committed to delivering high quality, locally-grown fruits and vegetables, as well as other food items, to 5,000 seniors across the state on a monthly basis.

Program: Food Insecurity

Region: Northeast

Contact: Paul Colligan

(617) 427-5200 ext. 5025

pcolligan@gbfb.org

Resources and Finances: Brown Bag NE is a non-profit which relies on donations and state subsidies to operate as well as on the efforts of the 11 Elder Services coordinators and their teams of volunteers (approximately 250 in total) who provide the facilities and helping hands needed to bag the groceries each month. Transportation, fuel, labor, order processing, customer service, inventory, and picking and receiving of food items are all provided by the GBFB staff. On average, 8-12 employees from Marketing and Nutrition to Development and Accounting have a hand in running the once a month program.

Feedback: A large increase in produce acquisition has taken place since 2005 thanks to the concerted efforts of the GBFB. Brown Bag NE has received much positive feedback from the elders it serves, especially from several of the Russian ladies who are particularly appreciative of the beets and greens provided in the winter months! Quarterly evaluation of the nutritional quality of the food being provided is done by the nutrition department at GBFB. In 2007, 84% of the fruits and vegetables provided to Brown Bag NE met the established nutritional standards of the program ensuring that the seniors served had consistent access to high quality, nutrient-rich produce.

Challenges: The greatest challenge to running Brown Bag of NE is finding community partners who are willing and equipped to provide the space and volunteers needed to gain access to the clients and to assemble the food bags. Internally, money and resources, specifically for trucking and food acquisition, are needed in order to expand the program to other areas of the state.

Helpful Hint: “Go for it – do it right away!” says Paul Colligan. But also, spend some time to think out all the resources that will be needed and to pilot test the community you are interested in working in to make sure the community resources can meet the needs of and sustain the program. You will need a strong coordinator from within the community to partner with.

Additional Resources: <http://www.gbfb.org/>

UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program

The UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program has intertwined two existing programs in order to encourage Lawrence youth to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. Each Wednesday of the summer, the recreation program for about three dozen children ages 6-12 at the park near city hall, teams up with the nearby farmers' market.

Children learn background information on featured fruits and vegetables, tour the market, participate in a vegetable scavenger hunt, and taste the fresh produce, then head to a nearby school feeding site for lunchtime where locally-grown vegetables are featured on the menu. The produce at the market is ethnically diverse, providing veggies like calabaza squash and Cubano peppers to the predominantly Latino population.

Program: Farm to community

Region: Northeast

Contact: Jeanne Baranek

baranek@umext.umass.edu

Resources and Finances: Funding is provided through the USDA Food Stamp Education Program. Collaborators are City of Lawrence Recreation Department and Lawrence Public Schools including Lawrence School Food Service. Farmers' Market support is provided by Groundworks Lawrence (Market Master).

Feedback: The program is quite small and unique, so no formal evaluation has been done. However, informal feedback from youth is positive. They especially like the "tasting" portion, which shows that the program has made it fun for them to eat fruits and vegetables!

Challenges: The biggest challenge for this program is the massive amount of organization it requires. In particular, the tastings require much effort, since the food must be picked up from the market, transported to a kitchen for prep, then chilled and transported back.

Helpful Hint: "Remember the practicalities." It may be tedious, but preparation and organization are key to a program's ability to provide a positive experience for the children participating each week.

Additional Resources: <http://www.umassextension.org>

Lawrence Public Schools

Lawrence's Farm to School program purchases its produce from Lanni Orchards to provide students with fresh fruits and vegetables for both the Summer Meal and regular School Lunch Program, until October.

UMass is an important partner to the school and "is such a help." Both UMass Extension and our staff have been crucial in getting children to try the items offered during the summer as well as at the beginning of the school year.

UMass goes into summer programs and provides taste testing with the kids. This year they went into each school once during lunch to make sure kids were trying the farm items.

Program: Farm to School

Region: Northeast

Contact: Gary Watts

978-722-8433

gwatts@lawrence.k12.ma.us

Resources and Finances: Funding from the NSBP, NSLP & Summer Meals Program is based on participation. The total purchases from Lanni Orchards this year amounted to \$32,592.00 (this includes the summer and regular programs).

Feedback: Students enjoyed eating the fruits and vegetables after a bit of coaxing. The staff worked with the children on their willingness to try unfamiliar foods and noticed greater acceptance of these fruits and vegetables after the program. For example, after a little education and coaxing, the students agreed to try the different colored apples. The students were previously familiar with only red apples, the same was true for pears. When it came to veggies, corn went over very well; others took a little more encouraging.

Challenges: Staff Buy-In – “you need to make sure your staff is onboard and willing to shuck corn and snap the beans.” Kid Acceptance – getting the kids to try new items can be difficult.

Helpful Hint Repeat Items –try items that can be repeated at least five times. If the kids see items on the serving line a number of times they are more willing to try them.

Additional Resources: UMass Extension <http://www.umassextension.org>
Lanni Orchards: <http://www.lanniorchards.com/>

Bay Club Mattapoissett

The Bay Club is a gated golf course community in southeastern Massachusetts. Its facilities include a dining room where Jim Mercer, the Club’s head chef, serves local produce. Initially, Jim made personal connections with some farmers by making the extra effort to pick items up at their farms or to have them dropped off at his home, which is near the farms and often en route to the farmer’s other delivery locations. As it became more popular for restaurants to buy local, sustainable produce, SEMAP emerged as a useful liaison between farmers and purchasers. By joining together with other chefs, it became possible to get farmers to deliver produce—if 5 chefs committed to an order on a particular day, the farmer would agree to come to town.

Program: Farm to Restaurant
Region: Southeast
Contact: Jim Mercer
jmercer@bayclubmatt.com

Resources and Finances: Jim’s labor costs have remained the same as when he bought conventional produce. He says the local produce is mostly in line with what he would pay for conventional, but occasionally will be 10-20% higher depending on the growing season.

Feedback: Jim makes a point of listing his farm sources on the menu. Based on feedback he has received, Jim believes that customers appreciate that the produce they are being served is locally-grown.

Challenges: As a chef, you’re busy. As a farmer, they’re busy. In theory, you may want to come together but someone really has to step up and make it happen. It takes some extra effort to get the farmer on board initially and to organize the deliveries, but once the ball is rolling, the farmers are enthusiastic.

Helpful Hint: “Make the effort. The biggest challenge is getting started.” If you commit to making a push at the beginning, there is a snowball effect later on. Through your initial farm contact, you may hear of other related farmers or products. You may also begin to hear from other chefs who are interested in doing a similar thing, and partnering with them makes it easier to obtain farm deliveries.

Additional Resources: SEMAP <http://www.umassd.edu/semap>
Chef's Collaborative <http://www.chefscollaborative.org>

Whole Foods Market Bellingham

Whole Foods Market has been supporting locally-grown produce for over 27 years. In Bellingham, the local fare includes seasonal cherries, tomatoes, peaches, corn, cucumbers, squash, lettuce, and much more. Whole Foods Market recruits local farm suppliers in a range of ways: visiting farmers markets, locating potential sites in the

Massachusetts directory of farms, building on relationships at other Whole Foods Market locations, and hosting informational seminars for farmers. Each Whole Foods Market location also has a “local forager,” a Team Member who sources product and works with the department’s buyer to establish local produce purchasing relationships. To promote the local products, Whole Foods Market provides colorful signage that lists the exact farm that the product came from and even a photo of the farm or farmer with his produce.

Program: Farm to Grocery
Region: Southeast
Contact: Ellen Farrar
508-966-3331
ellen.farrar@wholefoods.com



Resources and Finances:

Though local produce can be slightly more expensive, it has not been problematic for a large company like Whole Foods Market, particularly because their customers are so supportive of the concept.

Feedback: The local products sell extremely well and are often accompanied by encouraging feedback from the customers.

Challenges: Sometimes it is difficult to get the small local farmers to sell their

products wholesale to a store because they’d rather sell them direct to retail at a farmers market. Whole Foods Market has worked hard to find farms whose size and yield lend themselves to wholesale vending. Furthermore, they have attempted to support smaller farmers by holding farmers markets at a number of their store locations throughout New England.

Helpful Hint: “Celebrate the seasons.” Often, the seasonality of New England is considered a drawback for purchasing local produce. But here is a different perspective—the changing seasons and cycle of produce availability make each item special while it lasts. Take advantage of this built-in “hype” to create a buzz for your local products.

Additional Resources: Massachusetts Agriculture Tourism Directory/Map
http://www.mass.gov/agr/massgrown/agritourism_farms.html

Cooley Dickinson Hospital: Farm to Hospital Program

For the past 3 years, the food service program at Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton, MA has been ordering its produce and eggs directly from local farms. Daniel English, the food service director at the hospital, received encouragement to begin buying local produce from the hospital CEO as well as members of the surrounding Western Massachusetts community.

He contacted the Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA), who served as a liaison to connect Cooley Dickinson Hospital with an appropriate farm. English started cautiously and only purchased a small portion of the hospital's produce locally. However, the program was such a success that he now purchases as much produce as possible as well as eggs from local farms.

Program: Farm to Hospital

Region: Western

Contact: Daniel English

413-582-2323

Daniel_english@cooley-dickinson.org



Resources and Finances:

According to an internal cost analysis, the hospital saved an average of 97% by buying local produce as compared to the prices it would have paid to its corporate vendor.

Feedback: Surveys conducted at the hospital showed that 91% of customers knew that the hospital served local produce and 100% reported an increase in food quality.

Challenges: The main challenge for Cooley

Dickinson's farm to hospital program is the seasonality of most produce. However, a produce season and availability chart provided by CISA proved quite helpful in meal planning.

Helpful Hints: "Just try it. If you are unsure about starting a program, just try one product first to see how it goes. You may be pleasantly surprised." He also advises to get in touch with a liaison such as CISA.

Additional Resources: <http://www.buylocalfood.com>

“Northern Berkshire Grows” Community Gardens

The community gardens in North Adams are sponsored by the Northern Berkshire Healthcare’s REACH Get Fit program to promote nutrition and physical activity. The gardens are tools that create access to and appreciation for fresh produce. They are located on property in subsidized housing complexes. Weekly Garden Clubs bring together children, parents and grandparents to plant, maintain and harvest the gardens. Garden Club members learn about the different vegetables, how to prepare them, and are encouraged to “be brave” and taste an item on the spot, even if it is unfamiliar to them.

Program: Community Garden
Region: Western
Contact: Jennifer Munoz
413-664-5284
imunoz@nbhealth.org



Resources and Finances: A community organization that Get Fit had partnered with before, awarded a small local grant to start the gardens. Currently, the gardens are being supported by the Get Fit budget while Jennifer seeks additional funding. Grant funding is sought through online searches and leads offered by colleagues. The adjunct health issues of hunger and obesity associated with the community gardens widen the scope of the grants she seeks.

Feedback: Although the program is still “in its infancy,” the attendance at

Garden Club meetings is growing over time. Parents and housing managers view the community gardens as having a positive impact on the youth involved with them.

Challenges: Money is this program’s biggest challenge. “I can do it low-cost, but I can’t do it no-cost,” the manager says. She is thankful that she has bountiful ideas, volunteers, and community interest—these all help keep her motivated as well as improve her chances of being awarded a grant.

Helpful Hints: “Find community partners.” Get Fit had the gardening and nutrition knowledge, but teaming up with Target: Hunger, Northern Berkshire Neighbors, and the Berkshire Food Project, has been integral in generating community interest and participation. These community partners also connect “Northern Berkshire Grows” to the larger goal of decreasing hunger and improving nutrition across Northern Berkshire County.

Additional Resources: American Community Gardening Association
(<http://www.communitygarden.org>)

CHP Nutrition Services' Wednesday Evening Medley

CHP Nutrition Services' Wednesday Evening Medley is a weekly summertime community gathering featuring a farmer's market, kid's activities and cooking classes, nutrition education, and informal cooking demonstrations by staff nutritionists using produce from the market. The evening ends with a community dinner, prepared and eaten together. The number one priority of the program is to be accessible to people with low-incomes, especially families utilizing the WIC program.

Program: Farm to Community
Region: Western
Contact: Peter Stanton
(413) 429-8110
peterstanton@verizon.net

Resources and Finances: Funding is provided through a combination of private donations, grants, and fees. The CHP Nutrition Services provides access to their teaching kitchens, Farmer's market site, and kitchen garden. Programming and food for the evenings are contributed by South Berkshire WIC, Health Community Access Program (a program of CHP), and by numerous chefs and farms such as Farm Girl Farm, North Plain Farm, the Kitchen Collective Garden, Leahey Farm, and Wolfe Spring Farm. On top of the many hours spent conceiving and planning the program, approximately 192 hours were contributed by CHP Nutrition and WIC staff over the course of the summer-long program.

Feedback: Conversations with staff, farmers, WIC families, and community members were generally positive. Many of these individuals offered creative suggestions for improvements. In addition, a formal evaluation was conducted in the form of a questionnaire, for a portion of the program, *Apples to Zucchini*, which began 2 years ago. Participant families who received subsidized CSA shares, several of which came from one of CHP's partnering farms, were asked to fill out the survey. Findings revealed that participating families had significantly increased access to local fruits and vegetables. According to participants in almost every case, the quantity and diversity of fresh fruits and vegetables consumed increased.

Challenges: Peter Stanton, Director of CHP Nutrition Services reflected, "We were fortunately able to pool our resources, and by collaborating, able to serve many purposes with our program." He also conceded, "We had limited funding for marketing, and PR. We are now pursuing grants to further develop the program."

Additional Resources: CPH Nutrition Center (<http://www.nutrition94west.org/>); <http://www.communityhealthprograms.org/>



Fruit and Veggies—More Matters™ :
Working with Local Farmers to Improve Access to
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
Evaluation Tool

We would like to find out how you think you will use the enclosed resource packet which was developed to help community-based providers work to make fresh fruits and vegetables more accessible to consumers. Please take the time to complete this brief survey as your input will inform future program decisions and allow us to better serve your needs and interests. At any time please feel free to contact us with any suggested changes that you feel will enhance the usefulness of this resource packet. Thank you!

1. Please check the box that best describes your profession:

☐ Health Educator ☐ Teacher ☐ Primary Care Provider ☐ Other (please list) _____

2. Please check the box that best describes your work setting :

☐ Health Center ☐ Physician Office

☐ WIC ☐ Worksite

☐ School ☐ Council on Aging

Other (please list) _____

3. How do anticipate you/your staff will use this resource guide?

☐ For patient education

☐ For local print media

☐ To begin a farm to table program

☐ To get involved in or expand an existing farm to table program

☐ Not sure

☐ Will not use the information in this resource guide.

Other (please list) _____

4. How useful do you find the following segments?

a. List of farms in Massachusetts

☐ Very useful ☐ Useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Not very useful

b. Description of helpful organizations

☐ Very useful ☐ Useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Not very useful

c. 10 Steps to Starting a Farmers' Market

☐ Very useful ☐ Useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Not very useful

d. Sample Program Profiles

☐ Very useful ☐ Useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Not very useful

5. What additional types of program models would you like to see? (special populations, geographic location)

6. Which of the following topics, if any, would you like more information about? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Reasons to promote locally-grown produce
 - ☐ Information/contacts for farms
 - ☐ Resource agencies
 - ☐ Step by step guidelines
 - ☐ Model fruit & veggie programs throughout Massachusetts
 - Other (please list)
-

7. In what format would you prefer to receive information about fruits and vegetables? (Check only one)

- ☐ Hard copy
 - ☐ Web site
 - ☐ CD
 - ☐ Other (please list)
-

8. Are there any additional comments or suggestions that you would like to make?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

If yes, please describe: _____

Please return completed evaluation form to: Cynthia.Bayerl@state.ma.us or fax (617) 624-5075 or send to: Cynthia Bayerl, Coordinator Massachusetts Fruit & Vegetable Nutrition Council M= Massachusetts Department of Public Health 250 Washington St. 4th floor Boston, MA 02108. If you have any question please feel free to call Cynthia at (617) 624-5439.

The MA Fruit & Vegetable Nutrition Council Members

ABCD Headstart, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Beth Israel-Deaconess, BOND of Color, Boston Commission on the Elderly, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Public Schools, Boston STEPS, Cambridge Health Department, City of Boston, The Federation of Farmer's Markets, Farm to School, The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, The Greater Boston Food Bank, Hannaford's, Harvard School of Public Health, HESSCO Elder Services, Institute for Community Health, Lane Printing, MA Department of Agricultural Resources, MA Department of Education, MA Department of Public Health, MA Medical Society, New England Dairy Council, Office of Elder Affairs, Operation Frontline, Project Bread, Smokey the Wellness Guy, Stop & Shop Supermarket, Tufts University, USDA, UMass Extension, WIC